



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Highway
Administration**

Michigan Division

315 W. Allegan St., Room 201
Lansing, Michigan 48933

September 30, 2005

Ms. Susan P. Mortel, Director
Bureau of Transportation Planning (B340)
Michigan Department of Transportation
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Ms. Mortel:

FHWA and FTA have jointly reviewed the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Fiscal Years 2006-2008, including the Transportation Planning Process Certification, as transmitted by your letter dated August 26, 2005. Our review also included all of the urbanized area Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) that were transmitted separately with letters dated August 22, August 24, and August 29, 2005, and are included in the STIP by reference.

The TIPs for the Battle Creek/Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor, Detroit/Ann Arbor, Grand Rapids/Holland, Lansing, Muskegon, and Niles areas have also been reviewed for conformance with the air quality requirements. The air quality conformity review was coordinated with the Region 5 Office of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Flint area has an interim TIP which contains no regionally significant projects subject to the air quality conformity requirements.

We appreciate the Department taking the lead in revising the process and format for demonstrating fiscal constraint and we acknowledge this joint effort with the MPOs. The revised tables now include Federal funding categories along with non-Federal funds. This modification helps in understanding the financial analysis.

MDOT provided the MPOs with a standard format for the TIP document. Some of the MPOs continued to use their own format. We will continue to work with your staff and the MPOs to address comments on specific TIPs and to further unify and simplify the TIP process.

The FY 2006-2008 STIP, including the projects in the referenced urbanized area TIPs, is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The capacity adding project on Hill Road from Center to Genesee (TIP ID 520) is excluded from the approval pending a transportation plan update to include the project in the area's transportation plan.

2. The definition of the Trunkline Preservation Preliminary Engineering and Right-of-Way general program account (GPA) as negotiated at a meeting with your staff on September 29, 2005, is accepted. The GPA funding amounts need to be adjusted to reflect the cost of the projects that are anticipated to have EPE, PE, or ROW obligated during each fiscal year.
3. MDOT and FHWA need to monitor the projects being advanced under this GPA to assure the limits in the definition are not being exceeded and to identify any modifications that may be needed.
4. Agreement on definitions for the remaining GPAs needs to be completed by June 30, 2006.
5. The CMAQ "New Commitments" for FY 2006 must be removed because it is not based on a list of projects.

We jointly find the 2006 - 2008 TIPs, including rural "donut areas", for the Allegan County, Holland/Grand Rapids, Battle Creek/Kalamazoo, Benton Harbor/St. Joseph, Niles, Lansing and Muskegon Ozone nonattainment areas and the and southeast Michigan Ozone nonattainment area and CO maintenance areas are in conformance with the transportation related requirements of the 1990 CAAA and the regulations for determining conformity of transportation plans and programs to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality as contained in 40 CFR Part 93. A new conformity finding will be required if a TIP is modified by adding or deleting non-exempt projects, or if any of the triggering events specified in 40 CFR 93 occur.

This STIP approval covers the federally funded projects. Such projects may be advanced following regular Federal-aid procedures. If there are any questions concerning our actions on the TIPs or STIP, please contact Jim Cramer, FHWA, at (517) 702-1827 or Bill Wheeler, FTA at (312) 886-1621.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

James R. Cramer
Transportation Planning Engineer

For: James J. Steele
Division Administrator